and what amendments should be introduced. In introducing the Bill, I explained at some length my reasons for thinking that legislation on the subject is necessary, and I trust the Council will appreciate those reasons and allow the Bill to be proceeded with. I beg to move that the principle of the Bill be affirmed.

Mr. Ramier.—I beg to second the proposal to affirm the principle of the Bill, or as I take it, the necessity for the Bill. With all deference to the opinions of those that have thought the Bill unnecessary, I beg to observe that from my experience of twenty-two years at the Bar it seems to me absolutely necessary to have a definite law on the subject. It will greatly serve to promote the interests of the public.

The motion was carried.

Mr. Prince then proposed that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Thanu Pillai, Ramier, Kochukrishna Marar and the Mover, to report within four months.

Seconded by Mr. Kuruvila.

Carried.

NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS BILL.

Mr. Kuruvila.—At the last ordinary meeting, the Council had requested arrangements to be made for obtaining the opinions on this Bill of the High Court, the Commercial Agent, the Chamber of Commerce and the Agent to the Bank of Madras, Alleppey. The Commercial Agent who is a specialist in commercial matters is present here and the absence of his report does not affect the question. The High Court have upheld my plea for the acceptance of the measure, and they further support me by observing that the slight modifications I have made in the British Act do not affect the principle. This being a mercantile Bill, the Agent to the Bank of Madras, Alleppey, is a very competent person to express an opinion on its effect on commerce. I am happy to find that he fully supports me. He only makes a suggestion in regard to public holidays which is doubtless reasonable, but I think it may be considered at the Select Committee stage. The Chamber of Commerce has not, unfortunately yet sent a reply; but as Mr. Carson, the Agent to the Bank of Madras, is also Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, the absence of a reply from that quarter need not be considered discouraging. The only paper which has not supported my suggestion is a letter from the Hon. Secretary to the Travancore High Court Vakils' Association. I must say I am disappointed in finding that instead of helping us with the special knowledge which such a learned body can bring to bear on a measure of this kind, the Association has gone beyond its special sphere by expressing the opinion that the time has not yet come for the introduction of such a Bill. It is not so much for the lawyer as for the financier to express an opinion as regards the time for the introduction of the Bill. It is certainly calculated to promote the advancement of commerce and material prosperity. The financing of our mercantile business is greatly helped by the Bank, who know the benefits and have suffered the disadvantages arising from the want of such a measure. The Agent of the Bank is therefore a better and more competent adviser on the subject. As the High Court have also supported me, I trust the Council will not be dismayed by the letter of dissent from the Vakils' Association. I beg therefore to propose that the principle of the Bill be affirmed.

Mr. Prince.—I have much pleasure in seconding the proposal that the principle of the Bill be affirmed. I speak now as a member of the Council and not as the President of the Vakils' Association, although I feel it an honour and a pride to be so. Although the letter from the Association does not give the reasons for their holding that the time has not come for introducing this Bill, I presume they had very good reasons for so thinking. They take it, and no doubt correctly, that contracts are so intimately connected with Negotiable Instruments that it is inadvisable to introduce the Negotiable Instruments Act into Travancore until the Contract

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Act is also adopted. I think a Contract Act may well be introduced into this Council before this Bill reaches its final stage. The growing commercial interests of the country and the large industries that are being developed clearly point to the necessity for entertaining the Bill.

Mr. Ramier.—I beg to say a few words in this connection in support of my friend Mr. Kuruvila's motion. In my practice at Quilon and Alleppey, I have been asked on several occasions by respectable merchants why such a law had not been passed for so long a time. During the last four months, there was a heavy case upon Negotiable Instruments, in which the judge expressed more than once the difficulty of solving such questions for want of a Negotiable Instruments Act. I do not think there can be any doubt as regards the necessity for a Negotiable Instruments Act in Travancore, when we bear in mind the class of merchants we have in Quilon and Alleppey, and the magnitude of their transactions. I must say a word in regard to what has been remarked about the attitude of the Vakils' Association in this matter. I cannot agree with my friend Mr. Kuruvila in saying that it is not competent for the Association to express an opinion on the necessity for the Bill. I feel I cannot allow such a remark to go unrebutted. If there is any body in Travancore that is competent to express an opinion on such matters, it is the Vakils' Association. They represent the Bar of the country and through them the general public. I think they will be well-advised in saying whether or not there is need for a particular measure. It would doubtless have been better if they had given us their reasons; but we must take it that they had very good reasons for holding the view that the present Bill is not necessary, and they were quite within their sphere in having expressed that opinion. Without any disparagement, therefore, to their opinion, I support with pleasure the motion to affirm the principle of the Bill.

Mr. Kochukrishna Marar.—As a member of the Vakils' Association who was present at the meeting when the resolution in question was passed, I feel bound to say a word in regard to the remarks just made. The reasons which weighed with the Association in arriving at the opinion expressed in their letter have been so well explained by my friends Mr. Prince and Mr. Ramier, that I have only to emphasise them. Another reason, which has not been mentioned by my friends, is that the Bill being a highly technical one is not easily understood in this country. I must therefore vote against the motion.

Mr. Nagam Aiya.—For the reasons which the experts urge, I would support the motion.

The principle was affirmed by majority, Mr. Kochukrishna Marar dissenting.

Mr. Kuruvila.—As the Bill is a technical measure I beg to suggest that a strong Select Committee be appointed, with a view to secure the assistance of the eminent lawyers on whose cordial co-operation I depend for the conduct of the Bill in its later stages. I would propose the names of Messrs. Thanu Pillai, Prince, Ramier, Kochukrishna Marar and the Mover for the Select Committee, and request that the report be submitted within four months.

Seconded by Mr. Nagam Aiya.

Carried.

THE TOWNS CONSERVANCY AND IMPROVEMENT REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. Thanu Pillai.—I beg to apply for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Towns Conservancy and Improvement Regulation (II of 1069). This Regulation has been in operation for over four years. Its main feature, as you are aware, is the delegation to bodies of persons some of whom are not paid servants of Government, of the administration of certain matters connected with the sanitation and improvement of the most populous towns. The result of the experiment has so far been encouraging. Experience, however, has disclosed certain defects in the law and some needs for improvement. These have been brought to the notice

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